

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-03

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INFO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

XMT AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM LA PAZ DATED JULY 21, 1978
SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO LIMA, QUITO, SANTIAGO, DIA WASHDC,
USCINCSO J2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ, MONTEVIDEO IS REPEATED
TO YOU: QUOTE

UNCLAS LA PAZ 5742

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, BL

SUBJECT: STATE OF SIEGE DECLARED IN REACTION TO REPORTED
PRO-PEREDA UPRISING IN SANTA CRUZ

1. SUMMARY: MILITARY AND CIVILIAN ELEMENTS HAVE REPORTEDLY
SEIZED THE RADIO STATIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION CENTERS IN
SANTA CRUZZ AND CALLED FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR TURNING OVER POWER
TO GENERAL PEREDA. PEREDA IS IN SANTA CRUZ BUT THERE IS NO
INDICATION THAT HE IS LEADING THE ACTIVITY. CIVILIAN
ELEMENTS HAVE REPORTEDLY ALSO SEIZED THE RADIO STATIONS IN
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COCHABAMBA. THE GOB HAS DECLARED A STATE OF SEIGE THROUGH-
OUT THE COUNTRY. IN LA PAZ TROOPS HAVE TAKEN UP POSITIONS IN
CERTAIN KEY AREAS OF THE CITY, BUT OTHERWISE THE CITY REMAINS
QUIET AND MOST ACTIVITY IS CONTINUING NORMALLY. THERE IS
NO INDICATION YET THAT ANY MILITARY ELEMENTS OUTSIDE OF
SANTA CRUZ HAVE JOINED THE PRO-PEREDA MOVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. GOB HAS DECLARED A STATE OF SEIGE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY IN REACTION TO WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN EFFORT BY MILITARY AND CIVILIAN EFFORTS IN SANTA CRUZ AND BY CIVILIAN ELEMENTS IN COCHABAMBA IN FAVOR OF GENERAL PEREDA.

3. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR SAYS ONLY THAT BECAUSE OF A "REACTION" IN SANTA CRUZ TO THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COURT DECISION TO ANNUL THE ELECTIONS A STATE OF SEIGE HAS BEEN DECLARED SUSPENDING ALL SCHOOL ACTIVITY AND PROHIBITING ALL PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS BUT OTHERWISE NOT INTERFERING IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, PRINCIPALLY FROM THE DAILY EL DIARIO, ELEMENTS BELONGING TO THE UNP (PEREDA COALITION) IN SANTA CRUZ DECLARED A "NATIONALIST REVOLUTION" AT ABOUT MIDNIGHT WITH THE PURPOSE OF TURNING OVER POWER TO GENERAL PEREDA. THE NEWS-PAPER SAYS THAT THE MILITARY AIR COLLEGE AND UNITS OF THE ARMY HAVE JOINED THE MOVEMENT WHICH REPORTEDLY HAS THE COOPERATION OF ELEMENTS OF THE 4TH AND 5TH DIVISIONS, THE FORMER LOCATED IN SOUTHERN SANTA CRUZ AND THE SECOND AT ROBORE (IN EASTERN SANTA CRUZ). GENERAL PEREDA IS REPORTED TO HAVE ARRIVED IN SANTA CRUZ AT 1400 HOURS LOCAL TIME JULY 20 AND TO HAVE BEEN PRESENT AT THE MILITARY AIR COLLEGE WHICH IS APPARENTLY PARTICIPUTING IN THE PRO-PEREDA MOVEMENT, BUT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT HE IS LEADING OR OTHERWISE PLAYING ANY ROLE IN WHAT IS HAPPENING. IN FACT, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT PEREDA MAY HAVE GONE TO SANTA CRUZ TO CALM THE SITUATION THERE.

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4. ACCORDING TO THE NEWSPAPER "THE REVOLUTIONARIES" HAVE TAKEN OVER THE PRINCIPAL COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA IN SANTA CRUZ AND CALLED UPON THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN FAVOR OF TURNING OVER POWER TO GENERAL PEREDA.

5. THE NEWSPAPER ADDS THAT A 0200 HOURS JULY 21 GENERAL BANZER WAS IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR TRYING TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN SANTA CRUZ AND SHORTLY THERE-AFTER WENT TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF.

6. THE NEWSPAPER SAYS THAT ONE OF ITS CORRESPONDENTS IN SANTA CRUZ REPORTS THAT THE RANGER REGIMENT AND ALL OF NORTHERN SANTA CRUZ HAVE JOINED THE MOVEMENT. OTHER CITIES REPORTEDLY INVOLVED INCLUDE RIBERALTA, GUAYARAMERIN, TRINIDAD (CAPITAL OF BENI), COBIJA (CAPITAL OF THE PANDO), COCHABAMBA, TARIJA AND OTHER AREAS IN THE EAST.

7. REPORTEDLY, AT 0200 HOURS A HERCULES AND OTHER AIRCRAFT ARRIVED IN SANTA CRUZ FROM LA PAZ TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT.

8. THE NEWSPAPER SAYS THAT A MESSAGE TO THE NATION FROM

GENERAL PEREDA IS SCHEDULED IN THE "NEXT FEW HOURS."

9. ACCORDING TO THE DAILY NEWSPAPER PRESENCIA "POLITICAL FORCES" OF THE UNP TOOK OVER AT 2000 HOURS JULY 20 ALL THE RADIO STATIONS IN COCHABAMBA TO BROADCAST A REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT BE TURNED OVER TO GENERUL PEREDA. SO FAR THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT MILITARY FORCES IN COCHABAMBA HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THIS ACTION.

10. IN LA PAZ, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE TROOP MOVEMENTS AND THE TARAPACA REGIMENT HAAS MOVED INTO THE EL ALTO AREA, WHERE THE AIRPORT IS LOCATED, THE CITY IS GENERALLY QUIET AND MOST ACTIVITY APPEARS TO BE CONTINUING NORMALLY.

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11. COMMENT: SO FAR THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN NO MILITARY ACTIVITY IN FAVOR OF THE PRO-PEREDA MOVEMENT OUTSIDE OF THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ.

12.FOR MONTEVIDEO: PLEASE ASK LABATT TO TELL AIFLD DEPUTY DIRECTOR SAN HADDAD NOT TO TRAVEL ON TO LA PAZ WITHOUT CHECKING WITH EITHER DON KESSLER OR LABATT SNYDER.
BOEKER UNQUOTE VANCE

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